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REMARKS

The above preliminary amendment is made to remove multiple dependencies from claims 3, 4, and 8-10 and replacing the phrase "characterized by the fact that" with "wherein" in claims 1-10.

Applicants respectfully request that the preliminary amendment described herein be entered into the record prior to calculation of the filing fee and prior to examination and consideration of the above-identified application.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Applicants' primary attorney-of record, John J. Gresens (Reg. No. 33,112), at (612) 371.5265.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 23 January 2004

By _____
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Reg. No. 33,112

JJG:hjm